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Mexican Problem An Inheritance

In the minds of Republican politicians and editors there is considerable confusion with respect to modern American-Mexican history. Some of them seem to think that the Mexican problem is the creation of the Democratic administration, that it is a "Wilson problem." The truth is it is America's problem and it was as much a Taft problem as it has been a Wilson problem, and in the event of Mr. Hughes' election it would be a Hughes problem. It is very likely that as Mr. Wilson handled the problem much as Mr. Taft did, Mr. Hughes' method of handling it would not differ materially from that of Mr. Wilson.

Let us take a glance at the record. Mr. Taft became president on March 4, 1909. Within twenty months after Mr. Taft's inauguration, trouble in serious form broke out in Mexico, and during all of the

balance of his administration this trouble continued.

On November 8, 1910, there was rioting in Mexico City. The American flag was destroyed, the windows of American residences and business houses were broken. A street car containing American school children was stoned and the son of the United States ambassador was assaulted. These disturbances continued during November 9th.

On November 10th there was rioting in Guadalajara. The American flag was burned and windows of American banks and stores were broken. These disturbances continued two or three days.

On November 10, 1910, there was rioting at various points in Mexico. American consulates were wrecked and the records of the consulates were destroyed.

On November 18, 1910, the Mad-

ero revolution broke out and from that date on there was general disorder in Mexico.

On March 7th, 1911, twenty thousand United States regulars were mobilized along the Mexican border.

On April 13, 1911, Mexican forces took Agua Prieta, opposite Douglas, Arizona. In Douglas, Arizona three Americans were killed and five were wounded.

On April 4, 1911, Mexicans again attacked Agua Prieta, half the town of Douglas, Arizona, was under fire of Mexican guns. On that occasion seven Americans were wounded. Governor Sloan of Arizona called upon President Taft for the protection of Americans. The president replied declining to take military action.

On October 10 and 11, 1911, Mexican rebels attacked and captured Juarez. One thousand American

troops patrolled the American border and in El Paso, Texas, five Americans were killed and seventeen wounded.

On May 12, 1911, Secretary of State Knox sent to Mexico City a note denying that the United States intended to intervene.

On March 29, 1912, rifles were sent to the American legation in Mexico City for the protection of American citizens. American colonists in Northern Mexico flocked across the border, and there was great damage to American property by the Mexican mobs.

On April 14, 1912, the state department warned Madero and Orozco against further outrages to American lives and property.

That all occurred prior to the presidential election of 1912.

On December 4, 1912, President Taft, in a message to congress described his Mexican policy, which was practically the same as Mr. Wilson's has been, and he called it the policy of "patient non-intervention."

On February 9, 1913, there was an uprising against the Mexican government in Mexico City. Many days of street fighting followed. Several hundred Mexican civilians were killed, including two American women.

It was in February, during President Taft's administration, that Madero was killed and Huerta demanded recognition; but there was no recognition of Huerta and no intervention under the Taft administration.

On March 15, 1911, a few days more than two years after President Taft was inaugurated and about two years before his term expired, President Taft addressed a letter to the chief of staff, and in that letter he declined to do the very things that Republicans are now denouncing President Wilson for not doing.

Following is an extract from President Taft's letter:

"The assumption by the press that I contemplate intervention on Mexican soil to protect American lives or property, is of course gratuitous, because I seriously doubt whether I have such authority. Indeed, as you know, I have already declined, without Mexican consent, to order a troop of cavalry to protect the breakwater we are constructing just across the border in Mexico at the mouth of the Colorado river to save the Imperial Valley, although the insurgents have scattered the Mexican troops and were taking our horses and supplies and frightening our workmen away."

On April 17, 1911, the governor of Arizona sent a telegram to the president, reading in part as follows:

"As a result of today's fighting across the international line, but within gunshot range of the heart of Douglas, five Americans were wounded on this side of the line."

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-----In my judgment radical measures are needed to protect our innocent people. It will be impossible to safeguard the people of Douglas unless the town be vacated."

To this, President Taft replied as follows:

"The situation might justify me in ordering our troops across the border, but it takes this step. I must face the possibility of greater resistance and greater bloodshed and also the danger of having our motives misconstrued and misrepresented and of thus inflaming Mexican popular indignation. It is impossible to foresee or reckon the consequences of such a course, and we must use the greatest self-restraint to avoid it. I am therefore ordering the troops at Douglas to cross the border but I must ask you and the local authorities in the case the same danger exists to protect the people of Douglas as to place themselves where they cannot avoid it."

The only difference between the Wilson policy and the Taft policy was that Mr. Wilson called it "waterfall waiting," while Mr. Taft called it "patient non-intervention" (See Message 1912.)

On November 25, 1910, the Outlook, which became famous by reason of the fact that Theodore Roosevelt was its contributing editor, had an editorial calling attention to "the anti-American demonstrations which have lately taken place at Mexico," in which "great student demonstrations were made mobs broke windows in buildings occupied by Americans, attacked newspaper office favorable to Americans and attacked street cars containing Americans."

On March 25, 1911, the Outlook (Cont'd on page 7)

ONCE upon a time there was a child
That never had its picture taken.
That was its parents' fault.

Once upon a time there was a young man
Who never had his picture taken.
That was his fault.

Once upon a time there was a dear old Mother
Who never had her picture taken.
That was her children's fault.

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